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# Processing USDA-Donated Foods

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE / FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE / WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250  
August 1980

FNS-219

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Through the Food Distribution Program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) donates food to help meet the nutritional needs of children and needy adults. The program also expands agricultural markets for food. To aid American farmers, USDA acquires food under price-support, surplus-removal, and related legislation and makes it available to States. One of the ways the States make this food more usable is by having it processed into different forms.

## WHAT BENEFITS DOES PROCESSING USDA-DONATED FOODS PROVIDE?

Processing the foods that USDA supplies has many benefits, including:

- Helping to stabilize the agricultural economy by removing excess inventories of various commodities.
- Putting hard-to-use donated foods into more acceptable ready-to-use end products.
- Increasing the dollar amount of commodities that States can accept and use effectively in processed form.
- Increasing the variety of food items available for use in the National School Lunch Program, programs for charitable institutions, and nutrition programs for the elderly.
- Saving these programs and institutions money by decreasing prices paid for the end products.

## HOW ARE USDA-DONATED FOODS PROCESSED?

Commercial and institutional facilities process foods that USDA donates by:

- converting the foods into different end products, or
- repackaging the foods.

## WHAT END PRODUCTS ARE PROCESSED FROM DONATED FOODS?

Some examples of donated foods and the end products they are processed into are:

- Soybean oil—converted into mayonnaise, salad dressing, and french dressing.
- Baker's hard wheat flour—converted into pizza crusts, bread, and rolls.
- Ground beef—converted into patties and various precooked entree items.
- Durum flour—converted into pasta products.
- Dry milk—converted into ice cream and mozzarella cheese.

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## **HOW ARE SAVINGS REALIZED?**

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Each processed food item contains a specified amount of USDA-donated food at a designated value per pound. The price of the end product is reduced by an amount equal to the value of the donated foods it contains.

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## **HOW ARE PROCESSING AGREEMENTS ACCOMPLISHED?**

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State distributing agencies must approve processors' contracts. The State agencies also authorize schools, institutions, and nutrition programs for the elderly to enter into contracts with processors. The processor may then make the products available statewide to any school, institution, or nutrition program for the elderly that is eligible to receive the donated foods that the products contain.

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## **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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You may obtain information regarding the processing of USDA-donated foods from:

Food Distribution Division  
Food and Nutrition Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250

The Food Distribution Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is available to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, or national origin.